

Application No: 10/576,036
Amendment C
Reply to Office Action Dated 08/23/2007

Attorney Docket No: 3926.246

REMARKS

Claims 7-12 are pending in the application. Claim 7 has been amended. Claims 1-6 have been previously cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7-12 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Surace et al. (US 6,144,938) (hereinafter Surace).

Applicants assume that the Examiner rejected claims 7-12 over a combination of Surace and Packingham et al. (US 7,117,159) (hereinafter Packingham) because Packingham was mentioned in the last paragraph on page 3 of the Office action.

The Examiner stated that Surace discloses all the limitations of claim 7 except initializing a dialog step with a shortened prompt on the part of the speech dialog system. The Examiner then stated that Packingham teaches a method wherein the processor can present the user with only a tone prompt, rather a detailed version or an abbreviated version (column 19, line 22 – column 21, line 19), such that the user can more quickly navigate.

After reviewing the paragraphs of Packingham cited by the Examiner, Applicants note that contrary to always initializing a dialog step with a shortened prompt on the part of the speech dialog system independent of a user's expertise as recited in claim 7 (the word "always" has been added to claim 7 although it is implied because claim 7 recites that each iteration starts with initializing with a short prompt; the wording "independent of a user's expertise" has also been added to even more clearly define the present invention over the cited prior art and to facilitate the prosecution), in Packingham the processor presents the user with only a tone prompt only at the 25th and later times of iteration (see column 21, lines 18-19). In Packingham, the transition from a standard-mode to an expert-mode only occurs when certain criteria (such as

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user profile, navigation history, etc.) have been met. Packingham does not disclose anywhere that the system should always initialize with a short prompt regardless of the user profile or navigation history.

Also, the Examiner maintained that Surace discloses that a detailed prompt is output if there is no utterance by the system user in response to the shortened prompt after a specific time (column 10, lines 26-36, column 9, lines 3-24 and columns 25-26) without commenting on Applicants' arguments presented in Amendment A submitted on January 30, 2007. As discussed in Amendment A, although "TIMEOUT" is shown in columns 25 and 26 of Surace, it is different from the timeout concept of the present invention. For example, after a timeout, the system of Surace will say "Hurry up and say something," but will not output a detailed long prompt. The system of Surace needs a complicated system of "expert/novice rules 508" in order to satisfactorily serve both the experienced and the inexperienced users. In contrast, the present invention, through a strict prompt sequence of a first shorter duration and then a longer duration after "speech recognition system timeout," does not need such complex rules.

Claim 7 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over Surace. Since all the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 7, they are believed to be patentable as well.

Favorable consideration and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. Should further issues remain prior to allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the indicated telephone number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required at any

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time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-0951.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: November 9, 2007

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